

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-00975-1 - The History of Rome, Volume 3
Theodor Mommsen
Excerpt
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BOOK FOURTH



THE REVOLUTION.

“Aber sie treiben's toll;
Ich fürcht', es breche.”
Nicht jeden Wochenschluss
Macht Gott die Zeche,

GOETHE.

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CHAPTER I.

THE SUBJECT COUNTRIES DOWN TO THE TIMES OF THE
GRACCHI.

ON the abolition of the Macedonian monarchy, the supremacy of Rome was not only an established fact from the Pillars of Hercules to the mouths of the Nile and the Orontes, but, as if it were the final decree of fate, pressed on the nations with all the weight of an inevitable necessity, and seemed to leave them merely the choice of perishing in hopeless resistance or in hopeless endurance. If history were not entitled to insist that the earnest reader should accompany her through good and evil days, through landscapes of winter as well as of spring, the historian might be tempted to shun the cheerless task of tracing the manifold and yet monotonous turns of this struggle between power and weakness, both in the Spanish provinces already annexed to the Roman empire and in the African, Hellenic, and Asiatic territories which were still treated as clients of Rome. But, however unimportant and subordinate the individual conflicts may appear, they possess collectively a deep historical significance; and, in particular, the state of things in Italy at this period is only intelligible in the light of the reaction which the provinces exercised over the mother-country.

In addition to the territories which may be regarded as natural appendages of Italy—in which, however, the natives were still far from being completely subdued, and Ligurians, Sardinians, and Corsicans were, not greatly to the credit of Rome, continually furnishing occasion for “village-triumphs”—the formal sovereignty of Rome at the commencement of this period was established only in the two Spanish

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- provinces, which embraced the larger eastern and southern portions of the peninsula beyond the Pyrenees. We have already (ii. 206 *et seq.*) attempted to describe the state of matters in the peninsula. Iberians and Celts, Phœnicians, Hellenes, and Romans were there strangely intermingled. The most diverse kinds and stages of civilization subsisted there simultaneously and at various points crossed each other, the ancient Iberian culture side by side with utter barbarism, the civilized relations of Phœnician and Greek mercantile cities side by side with the growth of a Latinizing culture, which was especially promoted by the numerous Italians employed in the silver mines and by the large standing garrison. In this respect the Roman township of Italica (near Seville) and the Latin colony of Carteia (on the bay of Gibraltar) deserve mention, the latter being, next to Agrigentum (ii. 150), the first transmarine civic community of Latin tongue and Italian constitution. Italica was founded 206. by Scipio the Elder, before he left Spain (548), for his veterans who were inclined to remain in the peninsula—probably not as a burgess-community, however, but merely as a market-place.* Carteia was founded in 583 and owed its 171. existence to the multitude of camp-children—the offspring of Roman soldiers and Spanish slaves—who grew up as slaves *de jure* but as free Italians *de facto*, and were now manumitted on behalf of the state and constituted, along with the old inhabitants of Carteia, into a Latin colony. For nearly 179. 178. thirty years after the regulation of the province of the Ebro by Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus (575, 576; ii. 211) the Spanish provinces, on the whole, enjoyed the blessings of peace undisturbed, although mention is made of one or two expeditions against the Celtiberians and Lusitanians.
- Lusi- [154. But more serious events occurred in 600. The Lusitanians, tanian war. under the leadership of a chief called Punicus, invaded the Roman territory, defeated the two Roman governors who had united to oppose them, and slew a great number of their troops. The Vettones (between the Tagus and the Upper Douro) were thereby induced to make common cause with the Lusitanians; and these, thus reinforced,

* Italica must have been intended by Scipio to be what was called in Italy *forum et conciliabulum civium Romanorum*; Aquæ Sextiæ in Gaul had a similar origin afterwards. The formation of transmarine burgess-communities only began at a later date with Carthage and Narbo: yet it is remarkable that Scipio already made a first step, in a certain sense, in that direction.

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Chap. I.]

THE SUBJECT COUNTRIES.

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were enabled to extend their excursions as far as the Mediterranean, and to pillage even the territory of the Bastulo-Phœnicians not far from the Roman capital New Carthage (Cartagena). The Romans at home took the matter so seriously as to resolve on sending a consul to Spain, a step which had not been taken since 559; and, in order to accelerate the despatch of aid, they even made the new consuls enter on office two months and a half before the legal time. For this reason the day for the consuls entering on office was shifted from the 15th of March to the 1st of January; and thus was established the beginning of the year which we still make use of at the present day. But, before the consul Quintus Fulvius Nobilior arrived with his army, a very serious encounter took place on the right bank of the Tagus between the prætor Lucius Mummius, governor of Further Spain, and the Lusitanians, now led after the fall of Punicus by his successor Cæsarus (601). Fortune was at first favourable to the Romans; the Lusitanian army was broken and their camp was taken. But the Romans, already fatigued by their march and falling out of their ranks in the disorder of the pursuit, were at length completely defeated by their already vanquished antagonists, and lost their own camp in addition to that of the enemy, as well as 9000 dead.

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153.

The flame of war now blazed forth far and wide. The Lusitanians on the left bank of the Tagus, led by Cancænus, threw themselves on the Celtici subject to the Romans (in Alentejo), and took their town Conistorgis. The Lusitanians sent the standards taken from Mummius to the Celtiberians at once as an announcement of victory and a summons to arms; and among these, too, there was no want of ferment. Two small Celtiberian tribes in the neighbourhood of the powerful Arevacæ (near the sources of the Douro and Tagus), the Belli and the Titthi, had resolved to settle together in Segeda, one of their towns. While they were occupied in building the walls, the Romans ordered them to desist, because the Sempronian regulations prohibited the subject communities from founding towns at their own discretion; and they at the same time required the contribution of money and men which was due by treaty but for a considerable period had not been demanded. The Spaniards refused to obey either command, alleging that they were engaged merely in enlarging, not in founding, a city, and that

Celtiberian war.

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the contribution had been not merely suspended, but remitted by the Romans. Thereupon Nobilior appeared in Hither Spain with an army of nearly 30,000 men, including some Numidian horsemen and ten elephants. The walls of the new town of Segeda still stood unfinished: most of the inhabitants submitted. But the most resolute men fled with their wives and children to the powerful Arevacæ, and summoned these to make common cause with them against the Romans. The Arevacæ, emboldened by the victory of the Lusitanians over Mummius, consented, and chose Carus, one of the Segedan refugees, as their general. On the third day after his election the valiant leader had fallen, but the Roman army was defeated and nearly 6000 Roman burgesses were slain; the 23rd day of August, the festival of the Vulcanalia, was thenceforth held in sad remembrance by the Romans. The fall of their general, however, induced the Arevacæ to retreat into their strongest town Numantia (Guarray, a Spanish league to the north of Soria on the Douro), whither Nobilior followed them. Under the walls of the town a second engagement took place, in which the Romans at first by means of their elephants drove the Spaniards back into the town; but while doing so they were thrown into confusion in consequence of one of the animals being wounded, and sustained a second defeat at the hands of the enemy again issuing from the walls. This and other misfortunes—such as the destruction of a corps of Roman cavalry despatched to call forth the contingents—imparted to the affairs of the Romans in the Hither province so unfavourable an aspect that the fortress of Ocilis, where the Romans had their chest and their stores, passed over to the enemy, and the Arevacæ were in a position to think of dictating peace, although without success, to the Romans. These disadvantages, however, were in some measure counterbalanced by the successes which Mummius achieved in the southern province. Weakened though his army was by the disaster which it had suffered, he yet succeeded in inflicting a defeat on the Lusitanians who were imprudently scattered on the right bank of the Tagus; and passing over to the left bank, where the Lusitanians had overrun the whole Roman territory and had even made a foray into Africa, he cleared the southern province of the enemy.

152.
Marcellus.

To the northern province in the following year (602) the senate sent considerable reinforcements and a new com-

mander-in-chief in the room of the incapable Nobilior, the consul Marcus Claudius Marcellus, who had already, when prætor in 586, distinguished himself in Spain, and had since that time given proof of his talents as a general in two consulships. His skilful leadership, and still more his clemency, speedily changed the position of affairs: Ocelis at once surrendered to him; and even the Arevacæ, confirmed by Marcellus in the hope that peace would be granted to them on payment of a moderate fine, concluded an armistice and sent envoys to Rome. Marcellus could thus proceed to the southern province, where the Vettones and Lusitanians had professed submission to the prætor Marcus Atilius so long as he remained within their bounds, but after his departure had immediately revolted afresh and chastised the allies of Rome. The arrival of the consul restored tranquillity, and, while he spent the winter in Corduba, hostilities were suspended throughout the peninsula. Meanwhile the question of peace with the Arevacæ was discussed at Rome. It is a significant indication of the relations existing among the Spaniards themselves, that the emissaries of the Roman party which existed among the Arevacæ were the chief occasion of the rejection of the proposals of peace at Rome, by representing that, if the Romans were not willing to sacrifice the Spaniards friendly to their interests, they had no alternative save either to send a consul with a corresponding army every year to the peninsula or to make an emphatic example now. In consequence of this, the ambassadors of the Arevacæ were dismissed without a decisive answer, and it was resolved that the war should be prosecuted with vigour. Marcellus accordingly found himself compelled in the following spring (603) to resume the war against the Arevacæ. But—either, as was asserted, from his unwillingness to leave to his successor who was expected soon the glory of terminating the war, or, as is perhaps more probable, from his believing like Gracchus that a humane treatment of the Spaniards was the first thing requisite for a lasting peace—the Roman general after holding a secret conference with the most influential men of the Arevacæ concluded a treaty under the walls of Numantia, by which the Arevacæ surrendered to the Romans at discretion, but were reinstated in their former stipulated rights on their undertaking to pay money and furnish hostages.

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151.

When the new commander-in-chief, the consul Lucius Lucullus,

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Lucullus, arrived at head-quarters, he found the war which he had come to conduct already terminated by a formally concluded peace, and his hopes of bringing home honour and more especially money from Spain apparently frustrated. But there was a means of surmounting this difficulty. Lucullus of his own accord attacked the western neighbours of the Arevacæ, the Vaccaei, a Celtiberian nation still independent and living on the best terms with the Romans. The question of the Spaniards as to what fault they had committed was answered by a sudden attack on the town of Cauca (Coca, eight Spanish leagues to the west of Segovia); and, while the terrified town believed that it had purchased a capitulation by heavy sacrifices of money, Roman troops marched in and enslaved or slaughtered the inhabitants without any pretext at all. After this heroic feat, which is said to have cost the lives of some 20,000 men, the army proceeded on its march. Far and wide the villages and townships were abandoned or, as in the case of the strong Intercatia and Pallantia (Palencia) the capital of the Vaccaei, closed their gates against the Roman army. Covetousness was caught in its own net; there was no community that would venture to conclude a capitulation with the perfidious commander, and the general flight of the inhabitants not only rendered booty scarce, but made it almost impossible for him to remain for any length of time in such inhospitable regions. In front of Intercatia, Scipio Æmilianus, an esteemed military tribune, the son of the victor of Pydna and the adopted grandson of the victor of Zama, succeeded, by pledging his word of honour when that of the general no longer availed, in inducing the inhabitants to conclude an agreement by virtue of which the Roman army departed on receiving a supply of cattle and clothing. But the siege of Pallantia had to be raised for want of provisions, and the Roman army in its retreat was pursued by the Vaccaei as far as the Douro. Lucullus thereupon proceeded to the southern province, where in the same year the prætor, Servius Sulpicius Galba, had allowed himself to be defeated by the Lusitanians. They spent the winter not far from each other—Lucullus in the territory of the Turdetani, Galba at Conistorgis—and in the following year (60⁴) jointly attacked the Lusitanians. Lucullus gained some advantages over them near the straits of Gades. Galba performed a greater achievement, for he concluded a treaty with three Lusitanian tribes on the right

150.

bank of the Tagus and promised to transfer them to better settlements; whereupon the barbarians, who to the number of 7000 came to him for the sake of the expected lands, were separated into three divisions, disarmed, and partly carried off into slavery, partly massacred. War has hardly ever been waged with so much perfidy, cruelty, and avarice as by these two generals; yet by means of their criminally acquired treasures the one escaped condemnation, and the other escaped even impeachment. The veteran Cato in his eighty-fifth year, a few months before his death, attempted to bring Galba to account before the burgesses; but the weeping children of the general, and the gold which he had brought home with him, demonstrated to the Roman people his innocence.

It was not so much the inglorious successes which Lucul- Viriathus.
lus and Galba had attained in Spain, as the outbreak of the fourth Macedonian and of the third Carthaginian war in 605, which induced the Romans again to leave Spanish 149.
affairs for a time in the hands of the ordinary governors. Whereupon the Lusitanians, exasperated rather than humbled by Galba's perfidy, immediately overran afresh the rich territory of Turdetania. The Roman governor Gaius Vetilius (605?*) marched against them, and not only defeated 149.
them, but drove the whole host towards a hill where it seemed lost irretrievably. The capitulation was virtually concluded, when Viriathus—a man of humble origin, who formerly, when a youth, had bravely defended his flock from wild beasts and robbers and was now in more serious conflicts a dreaded guerilla chief, and who was one of the few Spaniards that had accidentally escaped from the perfidious onslaught of Galba—warned his countrymen against relying on the Roman word of honour, and promised them deliverance if they would follow him. His language and his example

* The chronology of the war with Viriathus is far from being precisely settled. It is certain that the appearance of Viriathus dates from the conflict with Vetilius (Appian, *Hisp.* 61; Justin, *xliv.* 2), and that he perished in 615; the duration of his government is reckoned at eight (Appian, *Hisp.* 63), ten (Justin, *xliv.* 2), eleven (Diodorus, p. 597), or fourteen years (Liv. *liv.*; Ætropol. *iv.* 16; Fior. *i.* 33). The third estimate possesses some probability, because the conflict with Vetilius is closely associated with the governorship of Galba. On the other hand, the series of Roman governors is quite uncertain for the following period down to 608; and the more so because Viriathus, while operating chiefly in the southern, fought also in the northern province (Liv. *lii.*), and thus his Roman antagonists did not belong solely to one set of governors. 139. 146.

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produced a deep effect: the army intrusted him with the supreme command. Viriathus gave orders to the mass of his men to proceed in detached parties, by different routes, to the appointed rendezvous; he himself formed the best mounted and most trustworthy into a corps of 1000 horse, with which he covered the departure of the rest. The Romans, who wanted light cavalry, did not venture to disperse for the pursuit under the eyes of the enemy's horsemen. After Viriathus and his band had for two whole days held in check the entire Roman army, he suddenly disappeared during the night and hastened to the general rendezvous. The Roman general followed him, but fell into an adroitly laid ambuscade, in which he lost the half of his army and was himself captured and slain; with difficulty the rest of the troops escaped to the colony of Carteia near to the straits. In all haste 5000 men of the Spanish militia were despatched from the Ebro to reinforce the defeated Romans; but Viriathus destroyed the corps while still on its march, and commanded so absolutely the whole interior of Carpetania that the Romans did not even venture to seek him there. Viriathus, now recognized as lord and king of all the Lusitanians, knew how to combine the full dignity of his princely position with the homely habits of a shepherd. No badge distinguished him from the common soldier: he rose from the richly adorned marriage-table of his father-in-law, the prince Astolpa in Roman Spain, without having touched the golden plate and the sumptuous fare, lifted his bride on horseback, and rode off with her to his mountains. He never took more of the spoil than the share which he allotted to each of his comrades. The soldier recognized the general simply by his tall figure, by his striking sallies of wit, and above all by the fact that he surpassed every one of his men in temperance as well as in toil, sleeping always in full armour and fighting in front of all in battle. It seemed as if in that thoroughly prosaic age one of the Homeric heroes had reappeared: the name of Viriathus resounded far and wide through Spain; and the brave nation conceived that in him at length it had found the man who was destined to break the fetters of alien domination.

His suc-
cesses,
148-146.

Extraordinary successes in northern and southern Spain marked the next years of his leadership (606-608). Gaius Lælius indeed kept the field against him; but, after destroy-

ing the vanguard of the prætor Gaius Plautius, Viriathus had the skill to lure him over to the right bank of the Tagus, and there to defeat him so emphatically that the Roman general went into winter quarters in the middle of summer —on which account he was afterwards charged before the people with having disgraced the Roman community, and was compelled to live in exile. In like manner the army of the governor Claudius Unimanus was destroyed, that of Gaius Negidius was vanquished, and the level country was pillaged far and wide. Trophies of victory, decorated with the insignia of the Roman governors and the arms of the legions, were erected on the Spanish mountains; people at Rome heard with shame and consternation of the victories of the barbarian king. The conduct of the Spanish war was now committed to a more trustworthy officer, the consul Quintus Fabius Maximus Æmilianus, the second son of the victor of Pydna (609). But the Romans no longer ventured to send the experienced veterans, who had just returned from Macedonia and Asia, forth anew to the detested Spanish war; the two legions, which Maximus brought with him, were recent levies and scarcely more to be trusted than the old utterly demoralized Spanish army. After the first conflicts had again issued favourably for the Lusitanians, the prudent general kept together his troops for the remainder of the year in the camp at Urso (Osuna, south-east from Seville) without accepting the enemy's offer of battle, and only took the field afresh in the following year (610), after his troops had been qualified for fighting by pettier warfare; he was then enabled to maintain the superiority, and after successful feats of arms went into winter quarters at Corduba. But when the cowardly and incapable prætor Quinctius took the command in room of Maximus, the Romans again suffered defeat after defeat, and their general in the middle of summer shut himself up in Corduba, while the bands of Viriathus overran the southern province (611). His successor, Quintus Fabius Maximus Servilianus, the adopted brother of Maximus Æmilianus, was sent to the peninsula with two fresh legions and ten elephants; he endeavoured to penetrate into the Lusitanian country, but after a series of indecisive conflicts and an assault on the Roman camp, which was with difficulty repulsed, he found himself compelled to retreat to the Roman territory. Viriathus followed him into the province, but, as his troops after

145.

144.

143.